

**"SERVING THOSE WHO SERVED"****TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF BILL #13, CD2 – RELATING TO THE EXECUTIVE OPERATING BUDGET AND PROGRAM FOR THE FISCAL YEAR JULY 1, 2015 – JUNE 30, 2016.**

TO: Honolulu City Council
FROM: Darryl J. Vincent, Chief Operating Officer U.S.VETS
Hearing: Wednesday, June 3, 10:30 AM – Honolulu Hale, 3rd Floor

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Honorable City Council Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of **Bill #13, CD2**, appropriating \$6,068,407 million dollars in **Grants In Aid Funds (GIA)** for Human Services functions for the benefit of 48 agencies across Oahu. I am Darryl J. Vincent, Chief Operating Officer for the United States Veterans Initiative (**U.S.VETS**), an agency providing services to local homeless individuals and families with children, for both veteran and non-veteran households across the islands and across the nation.

U.S.VETS' request for \$110,500 will be utilized to augment projects across Hawaii that are tackling the problem of assisting families as they seek to obtain housing in a market that continues to place an immense strain on lower-income households- the rental costs are twice the national average- the highest in the nation. Securing affordable housing via Housing First and Rapid Re-Housing initiatives is a difficult task with market rents high and homelessness rates increasing- current 2015 Point In Time (PIT) data indicates that unsheltered family homelessness increased by over 50% from 188 to 285 unsheltered families, which is the highest level since yearly PIT counts began. Additional assistance via Grant In Aid funding will help U.S.VETS assist families secure affordable rental units.

U.S.VETS appreciates the opportunity to utilize this valuable funding, which we firmly believe will make a tremendous difference as we assist low-income families who desperately need assistance in securing affordable rental units for themselves and their families. **Bill #13, CD2** is one avenue of funding that will allow U.S.VETS to effectively address the needs of homeless families as we transition them off the streets and into permanent housing, where they will also receive other critical interventions and services to help them maintain stable housing- families will also experience benefits including improvement to their quality, and quantity, of life.

Thank you for providing U.S.VETS the opportunity to testify in strong support of **Bill #13, CD2**, as a service provider as well as a member of Oahu's Continuum of Care of service providers, working for solutions to end homelessness in Hawaii.

Sincerely,
Darryl J. Vincent
Chief Operating Officer
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MISC. COM. 2047

Mission: "The successful transition of military veterans and their families through the provision of housing, counseling, career development, and comprehensive support."

Council